

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 2556

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, HO

SUBJECT: FORESTRY: GOH "PULP AND PAPER" MISSION RETURNS

ALSO PASS COMMERCE (BIC/OIM)

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 2381

1. UPON RETURN FROM VISIT TO WASHINGTON, RICARDO REYES, GENERAL MANAGER OF HONDURAN FORESTRY CORPORATION (COHDEFOR) TOLD ECOMOFF THAT TRIP WAS "QUITE USEFUL". REYES SAID THAT HE WANTED TO ESTABLISH A SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE GOH ON THE PULP AND PAPER PROJECT. THE PERSON SHOULD BE AN INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN PERSON OF IMPECCABLE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FORESTRY

BACKGROUND. OBJECTIVE OF ADVISOR WOULD BE TO GUIDE HONDURAN DECISION PROCESS TOWARD SOLUTION OF BEST POSSIBLE PROJECT FOR PULP AND PAPER ENTERPRISE. REYES DID NOT NAME POSSIBLE CANDIDATES. HE SAID PERSON SHOULD BE SO WELL KNOWN THAT HIS DECISIONS WOULD BE ABOVE SUSPICION OF ANY CHICANERY IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIS GOOD NAME.

2. COMMENT: BECAUSE OF LONG ACCEPTED INDUSTRY OPINION THAT PULP AND PAPER PROJECT COMMERCIALY A CERTAIN SUCCESS, FINANCING APPEARS TO BE NO PROBLEM. INTERNATIONAL LENDING
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AGENCY FUNDS, THE POSSIBILITY OF LOANS FROM VENEZUELA, AND

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE OFFERS RELEGATE FINANCING TO A SECONDARY ARENA OF PROBLEMS. THE PRIMARY CONCERN IS THE DEFINITION OF THE "BEST" PROJECT AND THE ADOPTION OF THIS PROJECT IN THE GOH POLITICAL PROCESS. THE EXCEPTIONAL ADVISOR SOUGHT BY REYES WOULD SERVE BOTH TO DEFINE THE PROJECT AND TO ASSURE A POSITIVE DECISION MAKING PROCESS WITHIN THE GOH. BECAUSE LATTER TWO ELEMENTS ARE CONCURRENT, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT EMPHASIS REYES WOULD PLACE ON ONE OVER THE OTHER. HISTORICAL PROCRASTINATION ON PROJECT, 25 YEARS SO FAR, GIVES CREDENCE TO REYES' CONCEPTION OF THE NECESSITY FOR A PERSON CAPABLE OF RAMRODING THE PROJECT. IMPLICIT IS REYES' CONCEPTION THAT HE IS HIMSELF UNABLE TO PERFORM THE TASK. REYES DID NOT SEEK EMBASSY OPINION AS TO A PERSON MEETING THE REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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